

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Texas
COUNTY:	Travis
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

## 1. NAME

COMMON:

The Governor's Mansion

AND/OR HISTORIC:

## 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

1010 Colorado

CITY OR TOWN:

Austin

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE

Texas

CODE

COUNTY:

Travis

CODE

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

The State of Texas

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Austin

STATE:

Texas

CODE

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

Travis County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Austin

STATE

Texas

CODE

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936, 1966

☐ Federal☒ State☐ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Division of Prints and Photographs

STREET AND NUMBER:

The Library of Congress

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE:

D.C.

CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

On February 11, 1854, the Texas State Legislature appropriated \$17,000 for the erection and furnishing of a suitable residence for its chief executive. Elisha M. Pease, then Governor, selected the site--an entire city block on a knoll to the southwest of the State Capitol grounds in Austin. A commission composed of Pease and two other State officials selected Richard Payne, an Austin contractor, to draw the plans. Bids were then taken, and Abner Cook, another master-builder, was awarded the contract. The original plans have apparently not survived, and it is unknown to what extent they were followed. As built, the mansion incorporates many design features known from other Austin buildings to be stylistically characteristic of Cook's work, and his is the name generally associated with the Governor's Mansion. Born in North Carolina in 1819, Cook came to Texas in 1839, settling in Austin in the fall of that year. By 1890 he was owner of a sawmill in Bashop, and in that year constructed a church for the Presbyterians in Austin. He remained in Austin until his death in 1889, and during this time was responsible for many if not the majority, of the city's most important buildings. Of his surviving works, The Governor's Mansion is perhaps the most impressive and most representative of his style.

The building was completed in 1856, and Governor Pease moved in on June 15 of that year. It has been continually occupied by the successive Governors of Texas and their families from that time on.

The dominant exterior feature of the mansion is the monumental hexastyle Ionic portico. Fluted columns support a full, proper Ionic entablature. The architecture has a paneled soffit. The absence of a pediment for the portico is said to be a regional characteristic, and is characteristic of Cook's work. The entablature conceals a low-pitched metal roof.

The full width second story gallery of the portico has a graceful and delicate wood balustrade made up of slender bundled slats forming an open diamond pattern. This, too, is a feature found often in buildings by Cook. The first floor balustrade and stair railings are a harmonizing modern addition.

Yet another typical detail of Abner Cook's Greek revival buildings is seen in the sidelights and transom of the front door. Here an unusually tall transom is intersected by the pilasters of the door jambs, and is capped by a high entablature. The second story door is much simpler, consisting only of the door and transom recessed in an unframed opening. The second story windows opening onto the gallery have six over nine sash and are floor length. First floor front windows are six over twelve sash.

The full entablature of the portico extends all around the building, and has been copied in the later new additions. Side elevations are simple and unadorned except for the entablature.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian    ☐ 16th Century    ☐ 18th Century    ☐ 20th Century  
☐ 15th Century    ☐ 17th Century    ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1854-56

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy                                       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Texas Governor's Mansion is an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture. Begun in 1854 and completed in 1856, it has served continuously as the home of the chief executives of the State of Texas since that time. Of Governor's Mansions built as such and still in use, only three are older. Those in Virginia, Mississippi, and Illinois. Of the four, the Texas mansion has best preserved its original appearance and integrity. Predating the neighboring Capitol by approximately 30 years, it has been thereby intimately associated with the history, development, and politics of Texas for more than a century. Among the notable figures who have occupied the structure are Elisha M. Pease,, the first occupant; Sam Houston; and James Stephen Hogg; each of whom served terms as chief executives. In all, 38 Texas Governors and their families have called the mansion "home" during their official tenure.

The building was constructed by Abner Cook, perhaps the most noted mid-19th century master-builder of central Texas, and stands as one of the most representative of his works. It also stands an eloquent witness to the aspirations, taste, and accomplishments of Texans, who had seen their land achieve statehood only 11 years prior to the passage of the bill providing for its construction.

The Governor's Mansion was the first structure to be designated a Texas historic landmark, recorded in 1962. Official dedication ceremonies were held December 7, 1969. The mansion was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on August 25, 1970.

# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	30	0	16' 22"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	97	0	44' 34"
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"			
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.06 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Allen Chambers, Architectural Historian	
ORGANIZATION Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service	DATE 8/14/74
STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street NW.	
CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE D.C.
	CODE

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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STATE Texas	
COUNTY Travis	
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The Governor's Mansion (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

7. Description

Continued

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At several periods rear additions have been made to the structure. Consisting today of family dining room, service rooms, porch, and porte-cochere, these additions have consistently respected and are subordinate to, the original building. They, as is the main structure, are of brick, painted white.

The plan of the original portion of the Governor's Mansion is that of a typical center hall with two rooms on either side. The two rooms to the north act as double parlors, being divided by a screen wall with a framed opening 12 feet wide. To the south of the center hall, the front room is designated the living room, with the state dining room to the rear. The second floor essentially repeats the plan of the first, with four large bedrooms separated by the central hall. Originally, there was a separate kitchen to the rear of the property. Behind the original portion are two additions. The smaller wing, directly behind the state dining room, serves as the family dining room, while the larger west wing contains the kitchen and other service areas. On the second floor these additions house the family living quarters. Together the two wings form an ell to the rear of the original house, and are connected by a porch on the first floor, and by a sleeping porch above.

Perhaps the most impressive interior feature is the stairway, which begins its ascent on the north long wall, curves gracefully as it nears the rear wall, and reaches the second floor on the south wall. In all, the stair has 34 risers. Balusters, two to a tread, are rather simple in profile. The handrail parallels the curve of the stair in a single sweep.

Interior trim is boldly scaled, and most effective, serving as a quiet back drop for the furnishings. Door frames taper to dog-eared flat lintels. Original mantels are equally simple. Those in the state dining room and the living room show paired unfluted pillars on either side of the fireplace opening, supporting an unadorned frieze below a solid, plain, mantel shelf. All of these have had mirrored overmantels added around the turn of the century. The mantels in the double parlors are complete replacements, and have built in framed mirrors on the chimney breasts above.

The grounds of the Governor's Mansion still occupy the entire city block selected in the 1850's. A separate carriage house now a garage, with a mansard roof, occupies the extreme northwestern corner of the block. During the recent term of Governor John Conally, the grounds were relandscaped, with walls, terracing, and gardens added. More recently, the block between the mansion and Congress Avenue, Austin's "Main Street," has been cleared and landscaped, affording a vista that makes the house more than ever a prominent landmark of the capital city.

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